Cloud Computing – “…the storing and accessing data and program over the Internet instead of your computer’s hard drive”. [PC Magazine](http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2372163,00.asp)

One of the assignments for the graduate class that I am taking is to evaluate the present condition of technology in my Computer Lab regarding “cloud computing” and make suggestions for improvement. Overall, I believe that our IT department has done an excellent job keeping the Lab current and 95% problem free. All programs are regularly updated using [Maleware](http://www.malwarebytes.org/lp/lp4/?gclid=CIqaiLX4zrwCFYqDfgodqTQAuQ), [CCleaner](http://www.downloadinfo.co/lp/review/ccleaner/MTE1NTk1Mjg2MF81MmZmYzkyMjNhZTFj/?kw=ccleaner+more%3Alabel_ccleaner+more%3Apcsupport&subid=DICCUS&cust=ccleaner+more%3Alabel_ccleaner+more%3Apcsupport&type=ccleaner&gclid=CMm3z8L4zrwCFUqRfgodC0IAwQ&utm_campaign), [PatchMyPC](http://patchmypc.net/download) (and other resources) which create a very dependable classroom environment.

The following are some of the suggestions that I would make:

**1) Suggestion:** Because the applications in our lab are out dated, accessing them online would be an inexpensive way to “upgrade”. This is a viable alternative to purchasing new software.

**Condition**: At times a Word document that was created in Office 2007 or 2013 can’t be accessed by our Office 2003 student stations.

**2) Suggestion**: If we were to download a **free** office suite of applications ([ApacheOpenOffice](https://www.openoffice.org/) or [LibreOffice4.2](http://www.libreoffice.org/)) this would give us up to date applications for our students to work with.

**3) Suggestion**: We could just use Cloud Applications (apps that aren’t resident on any computer) but are accessed, created and saved in the “cloud”.

**Condition**: A variety of useful applications are not available on our student stations.

**4) Suggestion**: At the present time I have six sets of Adobe Photoshop Elements on student stations but this severely limits the time that each one of the students can access a quality image editor. If we were to have access to web-based Office suites (as mentioned above) and even photo editing apps like [Gimp2.8](http://www.gimp.org/) or [Sumopaint](http://www.sumopaint.com/app/) (both freeware) we would be able to offer every student the opportunity to access a quality editor/application.

**5) Suggestion**: The personal digital folders (class folders) of the students are accessible by anyone using that station. The possibility of deleting, modifying and “borrowing” files is an ever present threat to student projects and assignments – the files aren’t secure because of this universal access. (This happens regularly.)

**6) Suggestion**: If we were to acquire a Google Drive account or something similar for the school then we could give each student a password secured account this would alleviate both of the above problems. Their individual files/projects would be secure and accessible from school or home.

Here are some of the advantages of cloud computing:

1. Cost effective
2. Access to current applications and technology advances
3. Free personalized file storage and access anywhere on any device
4. Possible submission of homework to teachers
5. Access assignments from teachers

A few disadvantages might be:

1. Stressing our current bandwidth for access to apps and storage (personal accounts)
2. Initial setup of the Cloud program
3. Supervising the use of the Cloud
4. Disruption of Internet service could affect access